Études irlandaises

40-1 | 2015
Enjeux contemporains en études irlandaises – In Memoriam Paul Brennan

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OpenEdition Journals

Electronic version
URL: http://journals.openedition.org/etudesirlandaises/4596
DOI: 10.4000/etudesirlandaises.4596
ISSN: 2259-8863

Publisher
Presses universitaires de Rennes

Printed version
Date of publication: 30 June 2015
Number of pages: 285-304
ISBN: 978-2-7535-4082-8
ISSN: 0183-973X

Electronic reference
Billy Gray, « "You can't grab anything with a closed fist": Reflections on Ulster Protestant Identity in Derek Lundy's *Men That God Made Mad* », *Études irlandaises* [Online], 40-1 | 2015, Online since 30 June 2017, connection on 21 April 2019. URL : http://journals.openedition.org/etudesirlandaises/4596 ; DOI : 10.4000/etudesirlandaises.4596

"You can't grab anything with a closed fist": Reflections on Ulster Protestant Identity in Derek Lundy's *Men That God Made Mad: A Journey Through Truth, Myth and Terror in Northern Ireland*

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Abstract

In Ireland and within Irish studies itself, considerable effort has been expended in the endeavour to disclose the complex interaction between past conflicts and contemporary attempts to recoup their significance in the present. Derek Lundy´s *Men that God Made Mad: A Journey Through Truth, Myth and Terror in Northern Ireland* a work of non-fiction published in 2006, is an invaluable and timely contribution to our understanding of the selectivity of national memory and the indelible link that exists between familial remembrance and its communal counterpart. A generically hybrid work, part historical investigation, part memoir, Lundy's text combines a blend of meticulous research with autobiographical snapshots, interspersed with an exploration of the connection between personal and collective identities. Claiming that "the lives of my ancestors resonate in the very core of Ulster history" Lundy uses the lives of three such ancestors as a prism through which to examine the standard, received stories of myth and history so prominent within the Ulster Protestant tradition. Moreover, my article will seek to show how Lundy, through an engagement with his own personal background as a member of an Ulster Protestant family, positions himself in a metaphorical space where individual memory, cultural allegiance and concepts of the self merge.

Keywords: Identity – collective, Ulster, history and fiction, society and religion

Résumé

En Irlande et dans le domaine des études irlandaises, un effort considérable a été fait dans le but de dégager un sens des conflits du passé. L'ouvrage non-fictionnel de Derek Lundy, Men that God Made Mad: A Journey Through Truth, Myth and Terror in Northern Ireland*, paru en 2006, contribue de façon précieuse et opportune à notre compréhension d'une mémoire nationale et atteste d'un lien indélébile entre souvenirs familiaux et sociétaux. Génériquement hybride, le texte de Lundy participe à la fois des mémoires et du travail d'investigation historique. Illustrée de clichés photographiques personnels, cette recherche explore le lien entre identités individuelle et collective. Parce que Lundy considère que la vie de ses ancêtres résonne dans le coeur même de l'histoire de l'Ulster, il examine des récits mythiques et historiques majeurs de la tradition protestante nord-irlandaise à travers la vie de trois de ses aïeux. En tant que membre d'une famille protestante d'Ulster, il se situe dans un espace métaphorique où s'entremêlent mémoire individuelle, allégeance culturelle et concepts du moi.*

Mots clés: Identité – collective, Ulster, histoire et fiction, société et religion

> As I walk through woods of birch and oak past tall elders and across cuttings, my ancestors accompany me every step of the way. (Alexander Tvardovsky[1])
>
> It's there in the basement and we can hear it if we listen carefully. (Conor Cruise O'Brien[2])

The outbreak, in autumn 2013, of widespread, violent disorder in urban, working class Protestant areas of Belfast, in relation to the ongoing dispute concerning the Union flag and its visibility on official, public buildings, has once again focused media attention on the phenomenon of Ulster Loyalism and its role vis-à-vis the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. Predictably, the centenary commemorations of the founding of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), which took place in September 2013, generated somewhat fewer, and certainly less sensationalist, headlines. The commemoration, which also marked the 101st anniversary of the signing of the Ulster Covenant, passed off peacefully with the main issue of contention concerning whether the contemporary UVF, responsible for more than five hundred Troubles related murders, should receive official permission to participate in the procession, and whether its current members can be viewed as the legitimate heirs of the original organization, formed by Sir Edward Carson in 1913. The Fernhill Committee of the West Belfast Athletic and Cultural Society, which organized the commemoration, issued a statement claiming that the parade represented "a genuine attempt by numerous community stakeholders to recreate a moment in history and every effort has been made to honour actual events, in as accurate a manner as possible[3]". The words "actual events" and "accurate", used in the statement are revealing, as they presuppose that historical events are not only inherently knowable, but that a straightforward and predictable relationship exists between past events and the contemporary reproduction of such events. Most commentators, however, would claim that the growing interest in the social and political dimensions of remembrance is invariably conducted in an atmosphere which is both polemical and charged, an issue which the proliferating field of Memory studies seeks to address.

Characterised by a number of different theoretical and methodological approaches towards the numerous representations of social, collective, popular

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1. Joackim von Winterfeld, *Jahreszeiten des Lebens: Das Buch meiner Erinnerungen,* Berlin: Propyläen, 1942 p. 325. Translation contained in Marcus Funck and Malenowki's "Masters of Memory: The Strategic Use of Autobiographical Memory by the German Nobility", *The Work of Memory: New Directions in the Study of German Society and Culture*, eds. Alan Confino and Peter Fitzsche, Chicago, University of Illinois, 2002, p. 87.
2. Quoted in *Conor Cruise O'Brien: Violent Notions* by Diarmuid Whelan, Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 2009, p. 83.
3. "18,000 Loyalists Expected for 'Ulster Day' March to Commemorate UVF Formation", *Belfast Telegraph* 24th September 2013.

and cultural manifestations of memory, Memory studies seeks to articulate the manner in which a social or ethnic group attempts to process noteworthy past events, thereby articulating a sense of lived connection between past and present. According to Graham Dawson, "memory is an element in the ideological repertoire of a society, its narratives and images forming an indispensable part of the cultural maps of meaning[4]", making it of central importance to the construction of subjectivities and sense of belonging. As such, it configurates a collective identity in the form of communities which share a common past and a number of remembered historical events that are believed to encapsulate their key values. This tendency serves as an explanatory framework for the manner in which the processes of identification and creative myth-making engage in a two-way interaction between past and present.

Interestingly, Dawson also contends that "the concept of memory opens a number of useful perspectives on the past present and its various modes of existence in cultures imbricated in conflict[5]". In Ireland, of course, considerable effort has been expended in the attempt to disclose the complex interaction between past conflicts and contemporary attempts to recoup their significance in the present. Defined by Joseph O'Neill as a country "saturated from top to bottom, with deadly narratives[6]", Ireland "has long been troubled by the recurrent, insistent, ceremonious evocation of the dead[7]", and, given that the interpretation of historical events has often been at the heart of national conflict, there have frequently been fierce clashes between rival versions of a common past. While one can sympathise with Edna Longley's suggestion, uttered during the commemorative year of 1998, that "the Irish [should] raise a monument to Amnesia and forget where they put it[8]", perhaps a more fruitful strategy would be to heed the advice of Irish historian R.S. Lyons, who has spoken of the need to divorce "the realities of what has happened on this island [from] the myths we have chosen to weave around certain events[9]."

One fascinating contemporary text which consciously adopts such an approach is Derek Lundy's *Men That God Made Mad: A Journey Through Truth, Myth and Terror in Northern Ireland* (2006)[10]. A generically hybrid work, part

4. Graham Dawson, "Making Peace with the Past?", *Memory, Trauma and the Irish Troubles*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2011, p. 12.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
6. Joseph O'Neill, *Blood-Dark Track: A Family History*, London, Granta, 2001, p. 81.
7. David Fitzpatrick, "Commemoration in the Irish Free State: A Chronicle of Embarrassment", *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*, ed. Ian McBride, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 1.
8. Originally from the *Belfast Telegraph*, 17th February 1998. Also quoted in Roy Foster's "Remember 1798", *History and Memory in Ireland*, p. 93.
9. In *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*, p. 36.
10. Derek Lundy, *Men That God Made Mad: A Journey Through Truth, Myth and Terror in Northern Ireland*, London, Jonathan Cape, 2006. Originally published in the United States and Canada under the title, *The Bloody Red Hand: A Journey Through Truth, Myth and Terror in Northern Ireland*, 2006.

historical investigation and part memoir, Lundy's text combines a blend of meticulous research with engaging autobiographical snapshots, interspersed with an astute exploration of the connection between personal and collective identities. He investigates the myriad ways in which cultural memories are produced, circulated and passed on in order to trace what historian A.T.Q. Stewart has referred to as "the mysterious form of transmission from generation to generation[11]". Believing the Irish to be "preoccupied with the past and unable to accept time for what many others take it to be – an amnesiac healer" (56), Lundy examines the myths that have grown out of a set of specific historical episodes and deconstructs the monolithic nature of such myths and the manner in which they passed into historical memory. In its desire to delineate the "slippage" of national memory and the indelible link that exists between familial remembrance and its communal counterpart, *Men That God Made Mad*, mines a similar intellectual terrain to Joseph O'Neill's *Blood Dark Track: A Family History* (2001), with, however, one noteworthy difference; while O'Neill's text examines his family's Irish republican credentials and their sympathy for the violent, physical force manifestations of that tradition, Lundy uses his Ulster Protestant ancestors as a prism through which to investigate the cultural iconography around which Ulster Protestant identity has frequently coalesced. Stating how, in relation to understanding contemporary Ulster Protestant identity, "the secret lies in their collective memory [and] in how they interpret history" (11), Lundy attempts to broaden the point of cultural reference away from the narrow interpretation of a small number of historical events around which the Ulster Protestant heritage has tended to be evoked.

In its resolve to restore the hidden complexities of the Ulster Protestant experience, complexities which have long been revoked in favour of a single, monolithic and homogenous historical narrative, *Men That God Made Mad*, with its labyrinthine exhumation of written accounts relating to three of Lundy's ancestors, seeks to trace the relation of these specific individuals and their shifting political allegiances to the movement of history. In doing so, it lends credence to Jean Braham's view that "We see the past in something of the same way as we see a Henry Moore sculpture. The 'holes' define the shape. What is left repressed or what cannot be uttered, is often as significant […] as what is said[12]". Moreover, it is my contention that Lundy, through engagement with his own personal experiences as a member of an Ulster Protestant family, positions himself in a metaphorical space where individual memory, cultural allegiance and concepts of the self merge. This article aims to show how, in seeking to investigate the past with

11. A.T.Q. Stewart, *The Narrow Ground: Aspects of Ulster, 1609-1969*, London, Faber and Faber, 1977, p. 21.
12. Jean Braham, *Critical Conversations: Interpreting Contemporary American Literary Autobiographies of Women* (New York, Teachers College Press, 1995, p. 37.

thoughts of salvage, Lundy's "journey" can be viewed as an attempt at achieving a renegotiation of selfhood and a clearer sense of individual identity.

While Lundy's text intersects with current theoretical trends in historiography which emphasise the importance of discontinuity, disruption and fluidity in the creation of "traditions", his narrative also reflects some of the contemporary debates relating to Ulster Protestant identity. It is a commonly held belief that Northern Irish Protestants have an identity "problem", in that they are prey to an incomplete sense of belonging and do not truly know who they are. According to Terence Brown, "concepts of identity as [commonly] understood have little significance for Northern Protestants[13]", a characteristic which Norman Vance has ascribed to the pervasive influence of Presbyterian dialectics on their collective mindset. Vance notes how, for Ulster Protestants, "the mingling of outer and inner, the national-prophetic, and the individualist-conversionist components of Presbyterians encouraged and reflected an ambivalent sense of identity[14]". Ulster Protestantism has been said to imbue those raised under its influence with a sense of otherness and difference, whether from their fellow Irish citizens or from the English, a perspective based upon their community's precarious claims to political, racial and ethnic legitimacy. Their identity frequently appears to take the form, not of a clearly defined sense of what they are, but a highly developed perception of what they are not. This is a cultural predilection that writers from within the Northern Irish Protestant community have frequently commented upon. For example, Ron Hutchinson, a dramatist and scriptwriter from East Belfast has recalled how, prior to leaving Northern Ireland for the United States during the period euphemistically referred to as "the Troubles", "identity was a big issue and it always struck me that Ulster Protestant identity was the vaguest of all". He admits to "wondering how you could describe yourself. You were Scotch-Irish to some, Paddy to a lot of the English and Brit to your Catholic neighbor[15]".

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13. In Andrew Finlay, "Defeatism and Northern Protestant Identity", *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, 1.1-2, December 2001, p. 16.
14. In Barry Sloan, *Writers and Protestantism in the North of Ireland: Heirs to Adamnation?*, Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 2000, p. 57. This ambivalence concerning Ulster Protestant identity has a long history. For example, although in the seventeenth century, Ulster Protestants attending the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh were individually registered as "Scottish Hibernicus", Scottish University officials invariably referred to them as "Irish" and linked their "Irishness" to negative attributes (drunkenness, insubordination, etc) traditionally associated with their "Papist" countrymen. For example, Professor Thomas Reid, Scotland's famous philosopher, once categorized Ulster Presbyterian students enrolled at Glasgow University as "stupid Irish teagues" See Patrick Fitzgerald, "Black '97: Reconsidering Scottish Migration to Ireland in the Seventeenth Century", *Ulster and Scotland 1600-2000: History, Language and Identity*, eds. William Kelly and John R. Young, Dublin, Four Courts Press, 2004, p. 109.
15. In Georgia McBeth, *A Plurality of Identities: Ulster Protestantism in Contemporary Northern Irish Drama*, PhD Thesis, 1999, New South Wales, p. 161. Many commentators have noted the deep-seated antipathy many Ulster Protestants feel for the English despite their reverence for the Crown. Tom Paulin has expressed amazement at "how people can simultaneously wave the Union Jack and yet hate the English, as many Protestants

Deciding that "we're not Irish, we're not English, we're not Scottish", he concludes by asking himself the question "so who are we?" Geoffrey Beattie, author of the autobiographical memoir *Protestant Boy*, admits to a similar confusion. Despite living and working in England for many years, he is adamant that "I have always felt myself to be an Ulsterman, a Protestant Ulsterman. But this, I must say, is a slightly vague feeling rather than a conscious and clear sense of identity[16]". There are, nevertheless, increasing signs that Ulster Protestants are attempting to address the various reasons for this perceived "lack". Andrew Finlay suggests that contemporary Protestant defeatism is less the product of a pre-existing identity than symptomatic of the absence of a Northern Irish cultural identity and "of an ongoing attempt to get one[17]". Gerald Dawe has expressed his belief that "the painful process of finding out 'what we are' characterises the present state of Northern Protestants[18]", and it is noticeable that recent years have witnessed, not only a substantial increase in the number of heritage centres and historical societies relating to the Ulster-Scots, but also a growing interest on behalf of Ulster Protestants, in a historical exploration of identity politics. Martin McLoone dates this development to the ongoing peace-process which, he claims, has reinvigorated Ulster-Scots studies in the Province – and indeed, in North America, where it is generally known as "Scotch-Irish studies[19]". Graham Dawson contextualizes

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do". (Quoted in Sloan, *Writers and Protestants in the North of Ireland: Heirs to Adamnation?*, p. 259.) Evidence of this pervasive anti-English sentiment is prominent in two recent autobiographies written by Northern Irish Protestants; Geoffrey Beattie's *Protestant Boy* (London: Granta, 2007) and Walter Ellis's *The Beginning of the End: The Crippling Disadvantage of a Happy Irish Childhood* (London: Mainstream Publishing, 2006). In the former text, Beattie returns "home" to north Belfast for a brief visit from Sheffield, England and is informed by his mother how "the English are a strange bloody people when it gets down to it" (98). For Ellis, although he also resides in England, he notices his parents' antipathy to the country: "neither of my parents set foot in England […] they thought of it as foreign and quite possibly degenerate" (52). Pamela Clayton has pointed out how the conviction that the English are somehow morally depraved and not to be trusted is frequently evident in Protestant dominated media discourses from Northern Ireland throughout its short history. One noteworthy example is the editorial comments of The Impartial Reporter, published on 12 March 1981, relating to the recent legislation of homosexuality in Britain: "What have the good people of Ulster in common with these perverts? The English used to be a great nation, but they have gone bad." In Pamela Clayton, *Enemies and Passing Friends: Settler Ideologies in Twentieth Century Ulster* (London: Pluto Press, 1996) 188.

16. Geoffrey Beattie, *Protestant Boy*, London, Granta, 2004, p. 9.
17. Finlay, *op. cit.,* p. 4.
18. In Sloan *Writers and Protestantism in the North of Ireland: Heirs to Adamnation?*, p. 80.
19. Martin McLoone, *Film, Media and Popular Culture in Ireland: Cityscapes, Landscapes, Soundscapes*, Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 2008, p. 7. There is currently an Ulster-Scots Agency which is part of the North/South language Body, a cross-border organisation developed out of the Belfast Agreement. There are also several distinct bodies related to this development which currently receive state funding, i.e. the Ulster-Scots Heritage Council and the Ulster-Scots Language Society, both based in Belfast. There is also a Heritage Council library in the staunchly Loyalist area of Sandry Row. The Good Friday Agreement also officially recognised Ullans, a term used to describe the Scot's variant of English spoken in Ulster. This recognition has not been without controversy. Republicans have described Ullans as a "DIY (do-it-yourself) language for Orangemen", and Unionist academic John Coulter has argued that Ullans is nothing more than "a broad rural Ballymena accent, washed down with a healthy support for Rangers soccer club". Carolyn Gallagher believes that it is being used

this growing interest as simply one manifestation of a more general trend that began with the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985; a pivotal political event in the Province which led, he argues, to a re-examination of the Loyalist, Orange and Unionist identities which had formed such an important element in the cultural and political life of the Northern Irish state since its inception[20]. While some academics, such as Andrew Finlay for example, view these developments as intimately related to a collapse of faith in the progressive potential of modernism and the concurrent rise of identity politics in the period known as "late modernity", others perceive the renewed interest in ethnicity as being artificially constructed in the light of political concerns. To some, the emergence of an Ulster-Scots identity represents the creation of a "new" tradition, a noteworthy example of what Harrison refers to as an "innovation contest[21]". To others, the current re-examination of identity issues relating to Ulster Protestants is long overdue, as, to quote Terence McCaughey, "cut adrift without bearings in a swiftly changing world […] Ulster Protestants have no other home to turn to, yet in a profound way they are ill at ease where they are[22]". Derek Lundy summarises the Ulster Protestant's dilemma most succinctly when he writes "Things for the Protestants were – and remain – so complicated. Where do they belong? Where is home? Surely everyone belongs somewhere?" (280).

There are, of course, those who claim to know exactly where Northern Irish Protestants belong, that place being *somewhere else*. Subject to summary dismissal and marginalization throughout the centuries, the growing awareness of Northern Irish Protestant culture as something distinctive and worthy of serious consideration is a comparatively recent phenomenon. As Boyce remarks, "the north was, to most southern Irish historians, what Africa had been to the Victorians; a largely black map, with few guiding features and inhabited by unknown and possibly unknowable beings[23]". To the extent that Ulster Protestants were deemed to be "knowable", they were frequently viewed as antediluvian, monolithic, dictatorial, blinkered and lacking in imagination. To many observers, they appeared to embrace illiberalism and disputatiousness, making their culture an "unattractive, if not incomprehensible phenomenon, associated with raised voices, semi-biblical

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to bolster a revanchist view of Loyalist identity. "This identity is revanchist because it seeks to establish Ulster as a definitely Protestant place in a way that negates and otherwise delegitimizes an Irish Catholic place in the Province" (97). (See the chapter "Fighting with History Instead of Guns" in her monograph *After the Peace: Loyalist Paramilitaries in Post-Accord Northern Ireland*, New York, Cornell University Press, 2007, p. 84.) See also Malachi O'Doherty's article "Loyalists Discover a Language and a History", *The Scotsman* 5th January 2001, for more information on this matter.

20. Graham Dawson, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
21. Qtd. in Mairéad Nic Craith, *Plural Identities, Singular Narratives: The Case of Northern Ireland*, Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2002.
22. In Sloan, *Writers and Protestantism in the North of Ireland: Heirs for Adamnation?*, p. 78.
23. Nic Craith, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

language and confrontational marches[24]". To Yeats, the Northern Protestants were "a horrid lot", who "within our borders would sour all our tempers[25]", and Declan Kiberd has written of "the curious blend of resolution and hysteria, of barbarous vulgarity and boot-faced sobriety which lies beneath the emotions of Ulster Protestantism[26]". To Irish Republicans, Ulster Protestants were viewed either as a kind of pariah group, the mere instrument of British imperialism, or simply "not there". As John Fulton points out, to many nationalists, "[t]heir culture has no rights, no claim to an alternative identity. Emotionally, the non-people are hated or at least detested[27]". That the dominant trend in representations of Ulster Protestant identity has been a metonymic reduction of real communities to the sash, the blood and thunder band and latterly the balaclava, is perhaps not surprising if one accepts Tom McGurk's description of Northern Protestants as being representative of a larger body of public opinion; McGurk, a journalist from the north of Ireland, defines them as "an intrinsically, culturally, emotionally [and] genetically disordered political community incapable of saving even itself[28]". Reading such comments one is reminded of the T-shirt adorned by Johnny Adair and his paramilitary cohorts during the Drumcree stand-off in 2001; prominently inscribed over a visual representation of the Ulster flag, and written in bold type of red, white and blue letters, were the words "No one likes us and we don't give a fuck" .

The vitriol directed towards Ulster Protestants has often reflected an overwhelming antipathy towards the attitudes they, and their political spokesmen, purportedly represent. Views often perceived as embodying both vestiges of an outmoded colonial heritage, allied to a reactionary suspicion of modern political pluralism, are unlikely to appeal to those predisposed towards progressive liberal or left wing ideologies. However, even those who look benignly upon Northern Protestants have commented upon their tendency to, in the words of one observer, "constantly gain the moral ground only to throw themselves off it[29]". This is frequently linked to a defensiveness about their culture which renders them vulnerable to being vilified, both nationally and internationally. The well documented status of the Ulster Protestant historical vision, which tends to evoke real or imagined perceptions of betrayal, encirclement and the threat of extinction, suggests the imprint of a deep, seemingly permanent, counter-enlightenment skepticism.

24. Barry Sloan, "Blessed Assurance or Struggling with Salvation? Religion and Autobiographical Writing from Ulster", p. 104. In *Irish Encounters: Poetry, Politics and Prose*, ed. Alan Mashall and Neil Sammells, Bath, Sulis Press, 1998.
25. In Lundy, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
26. In Sloan, *Writers and Protestantism in the North of Ireland: Heirs to Adamnation?*, p. 2.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
28. Tom McGurk, "*Sunday Business Post*" 26th March 2000 In Andrew Finlay, "Defeatism and Northern Protestant Identity", *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, 1.2 (2001), p. 10.
29. Andrew Finlay, Defeatism and Northern Protestant Identity", *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, 1.2, 2001, p. 17.

The myths, history, symbols and ideology which lie at the crux of their perception of themselves can appear starkly simple in outline and depressingly lacking in emotional range and complexity. Their heritage privileges the celebration of events which have been given great symbolic importance or interpreted as signs inscribed with meaning, and they appear to embrace the notion of cultural, political and physical resistance not only against a hostile and encroaching world, but towards the very concept of change itself. Inevitably, such inflexibility, allied with the austerity that some have ascribed as Ulster Protestantism's pre-eminent cast of mind, is not infrequently contrasted with the more "romantic" traditions of Irish Republicanism. Whereas northern nationalists often appear confident in their cultural and political traditions, Ulster Protestants seem intent upon ensuring that they do not surrender the past to the present, or indeed, to the future. This contrast has been noted by Alan Wardle, a community worker active in Protestant West Belfast: "It's a different fishbowl on this side of the peace wall. On the other side […] it's nice clear water, it's changed regularly, it's aerated regularly. On this side no one has changed the water for years. It's muggy, we're bumping into a glass wall. No one knows what direction they're going in[30]." Jonathan Burgess, a Protestant dramatist based in the city of Derry makes a similar point, while simultaneously advocating the development of a strategic alternative:

> The romantic vision painted on the gable-end of some red haired Irish colleen with tears trickling down her face, an Armalite in one hand and a ballot box in the other, is a very romantic notion as she looks down over Erin's ripped side. Protestants don't have that, they just have the red clenched fist which speaks determination […] it's not romantic to keep things the same. So therefore you have to find other avenues whereby you unclench that fist and you get the hand to come out [because] you can't grab anything with a closed fist […] but the fingers are being loosened and the stiffness is being worked out of it[31].

Perhaps the most noteworthy confirmation of Burgess's claim that, in terms of Ulster Protestant identity, "the fingers are being loosened and the stiffness is being worked out", is Derek Lundy's *Men That God Made Mad: A Journey*

30. In Bill Rolston, "Dealing with the Past: Pro-State Paramilitaries, Truth and Transition in Northern Ireland", *Human Rights Quarterly* 28 (2006), p. 668.

31. In Wallace McDowell, "Renegotiating Loyalist Identities Through Performance Practices", PhD thesis, unpublished. The University of Warwick, 2008, p. 240. Interestingly Burgess both wrote and produced a play in 2004 entitled *Lundy's Downfall*. Many Ulster Protestants have commented upon how the comparison made between their own culture and that of Irish Catholics is frequently an unflattering one. Gary Mitchell, a dramatist from the Rathcoole estate outside Belfast, has said: "In the area I work in, theatre and media, it's easier to talk about nationalism and Republicanism. Continually, I hear the word sexy, whereas in terms of Protestants it is seen as very boring and nasty and dreadful." Quoted in Susan McKay, *Northern Protestants: An Unsettled People*, Belfast, Blackstaff Press, 2000, p. 115.

Through Truth, Myth and Terror in Northern Ireland, published in 2006. Born in Belfast, into a Protestant working class family, Lundy was baptized in the Protestant Church of Ireland before emigrating with his parents, first to England and then subsequently to Canada. Claiming that "the lives of my ancestors resonate in the very core of Ulster history" (28) Lundy uses the lives of three such ancestors as a means through which to examine the standard, received stories of myth and history so prominent within the Ulster Protestant tradition. Writing how "One of this book's themes is how people in Ireland, and the Protestants in particular, have created out of history the myths they have needed to justify their present beliefs and actions" (13), Lundy explores the lives of the notorious Lt. Colonel Robert Lundy, acting Governor during the 1689 siege of Derry; William Steel Dickson, a Presbyterian minister and prominent activist in the 1798 United Irishmen Rebellion; and "Billy" Lundy, the author's paternal grandfather, a member of the original UVF, and a man widely known as an intransigent Loyalist and sectarian bigot. Lundy admits that he chose these three distant relatives with a particular purpose in mind:

> The lives of Robert Lundy, William Steel Dickson and Billy Lundy encapsulate many themes in the Northern Irish past. Robert and William played roles that can be described as pivotal. In telling their stories and Billy's more modest one, perhaps I can lay bare the harsh and sometimes murderous mythologies of Northern Ireland. (28)

In relation to the specific conflict in Northern Ireland, Lundy categorically believes that "The severed red hand still seems to be a perfect symbol for the Province" (2) and acknowledges how the roots of violence in contemporary Ulster, both deep and tenacious, form a recognizable line to the present. Admitting that "The Protestants in particular have created an appalling public image for themselves" (2) he relates this, not only to his conviction that the standard, received and sanctified version of history is a Catholic and Nationalist narrative, but also to the manner in which the Ulster Protestants have selectively created out of their historical memory, the myths needed to justify their present beliefs, attitudes and actions. As historical memory in Northern Ireland is invariably used as a mainstay of political rhetoric, the accounts of the past implicitly (and explicitly) generate descriptive models for the present. In proposing a dynamic alternative to the traditionally narrow evocation of military battles and sieges which have dominated the Ulster Protestant historical vision, Lundy seeks to reconfigure their historical experience as a more complex phenomenon than reductive summaries would have us believe. *Men That God Made Mad* promotes a more fluid dialogue between past and present, thereby invoking an Ulster Protestantism which is multifaceted as opposed to reified, pluralistic rather than monolithic. Lundy's text can therefore

be viewed as a direct refutation of the belief, widely held in certain circles, that Northern Irish Protestants, due to their adherence to a "fixed" and unchanging historical discourse, should be seen as "God's frozen people."

It is important at this juncture to emphasise the extent to which the name "Lundy" resonates within Ulster Protestant culture. According to one commentator "so reviled is the name Lundy among denizens of Loyalism that mere mention of it provokes paroxysms of incontinent fury[32]". Such antagonism emanates from the central position which Lt. Colonel Robert Lundy occupies within Ulster Protestant popular culture. In 1689, the city of Derry was the scene for one of the defining moments of the Williamite wards in Ireland when James II proposed replacing the city's Protestant corporation with a Catholic executive and also sent a new, predominantly Catholic, garrison to replace the existing one. Pivotal to the narrative of the time – and subsequently – was the presumed treachery of Governor Robert Lundy, who, upon deciding that the city was impossible to defend militarily, advocated that conciliatory terms should be sought with the Jacobite forces encamped beyond the city walls. In the face of opposition to this view, Lundy was removed from office by other prominent members of the Corporation and smuggled out of the city. Thirteen apprentices shut the city gates and a prolonged siege ensued, with Derry subsequently becoming ravaged by fever, dysentery and starvation. Lasting for 105 days, the blockade ended on 28th July 1689, when a supply ship, The Mountjoy, managed to relieve the beleaguered city. The siege has been commemorated by the Apprentice Boys of Derry since 1823 and the annual ritual burning of Lundy's effigy on the 11th July bonfires across the whole of Northern Ireland, is symbolic of his role as the foremost traitor to the Protestant cause. So prevalent has such a view of Lundy become that, as Geber has commented "he [Lundy] adds so much as a traitor that, had he not existed, it would have been necessary to invent him[33]".

In Ulster therefore, the name "Lundy" has long been synonymous with fears of betrayal and a covert willingness to submit to the subterfuges of those who sought to undermine the Protestant cause. His name is often invoked as a warning, a personification of the need for constant vigilance against treachery, emanating not only from external enemies but from within the Ulster Protestant community itself. During periods of constitutional crisis and political instability, the figure of Lundy acquires particular symbolic significance; for example, during the Home Rule crisis in 1912, the British Conservative party leader, Andrew Bonor Law appeared at a public rally in Ulster where he declared to members of the Ulster Volunteer Force that "[t]he timid have left you, your Lundys have betrayed you,

32. *Ibid.*, p. 318.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 320.

but you have [once again] closed your gates[34]". Pamela Clayton has noted how "even moderate Protestants often earn the appellation "Lundy" or "traitor", and in comparatively recent times Unionist and Loyalist political leaders such as Terence O'Neill, Brian Faulkner, David Trimble and David Irvine have all suffered the ignominy of being chastised as "Lundys", presumably because they all sought a degree of accommodation with nationalist and Republican aspirations. Ivan Cooper, a Protestant Civil Rights activist in the 1970s, who subsequently became a member of the Catholic SDLP party – and therefore a conspicuous and much reviled example of a "Lundy" in the eyes of many Protestants of the time – has mentioned how northern Protestants "have grown up knowing that to be called a Lundy is the ultimate shame[35]". Desmond Bell, an academic and film producer from Northern Ireland writes how, for Ulster Loyalists "What is completely beyond the pale is being a Lundy, a traitor to your own people", adding for good measure how "[t]here is no concept within Protestantism of forgiveness for Lundys[36]".

When exploring his progenitor's role in the Siege of Derry, Lundy uses both circumstantial and chronicled evidence in order to examine how the complex and unsettling real course of events could be reduced to one clear and necessarily simple story, shorn of both ambiguity and nuance. While admitting how "[s]ome modernist, revisionist historians are kinder to Robert and [simply] view him as a pessimist and defeatist" (34), he has great difficulty in ascertaining the reliability of certain basic facts, given that the events of the siege were fraught with ideology and politics from the moment they occurred. Acknowledging how, in terms of the paltry historical evidence available, there are uncertainties, hedges and evasions, he warns the reader that his investigation is not conclusive to "sure knowledge, only to more or less safe bets" (127). This recognition points to a central concern of Lundy's text, that of representation. Given his awareness of the ways in which written documents and official histories serve to obscure rather than convey the complexity of the historical subject, Lundy problematises the issue of reliability and searches instead for the narrative "holes" frequently discarded by more conventional historical discourses. Disinclined to trust linear, orderly depictions of the past, Lundy's views are reminiscent of those promulgated by the late Northern Irish dramatist Stewart Parker, who wrote of Irish history: "Turn into any given moment from it, and the wavelength soon grows crowded with a babble of

34. *Ibid.*, p. 318.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 320.

36. In Marilyn Hynd, *Further Afield: Journeys from Protestant Past,* (Belfast, Beyond the Pale publications, 1996, p. 48. This was "brought home" to Desmond Bell in a most horrific way. He recounts how "One of my friends married a Catholic and they began life together in a Loyalist area after the wedding. A fortnight later she was murdered. Loyalists broke into her house and shot her dead while she was sleeping. They didn't shoot the husband. That was the point. She was the Lundy, the traitor" (48).

voices from all the other moments up to, and including, the present[37]." Conceding that, from the perspective of the surviving historical records, Robert is "essentially faceless, a visual mystery" (38), Lundy surmounts such obstacles by attempting an imaginative reconfiguration of his subject whereby it is possible "to fix Robert with any aspect we desire" (38). By adopting such an approach, he questions the standard narrative attributed to his ancestor and proposes a more nuanced meditation on what he is inclined to see as Robert's tolerance and desire for compromise. This imaginative reconstruction is, he points out, no less "true" than the conventional historical narrative, as in relation to Robert, factual accuracy has long been superseded by a demonised fantasy figure which embodies Protestant fears of betrayal. The "myth" of Lt. Colonel Robert Lundy, which has subsequently been transmitted from one generation to the next, while modified in certain particulars depending on the circumstances of the time, has served to condition the perceptions of the Protestant community which inherits it. The "myth" of this iconic figure, which acquires substance and affirmation over time, performs a function for the ethnic group and serves as a repository of cultural memory. Moreover, Lundy is adroit at drawing attention to how the "myth" pertaining to Governor Robert Lundy has obscured alterior and dissident views of history within the Ulster Protestant community itself. Rather than being the unified conglomeration of Protestant forces joined by their opposition to "Papist" designs, Lundy notes how, in 1689, "The Protestants of Ulster […] were a loose and conflicted coalition of interests and allegiances, far from being the united people of contemporary Northern Irish mythology" (52). Robert himself – a Scottish officer in an Irish regiment and part of England's occupying army – was a living embodiment of these conflicted allegiances.

Lundy's exploration of how dissenting views have been erased or marginalized within the Ulster Protestant collective memory, acquires even greater significance when he turns his attention to the figure of his great-great-great-great grandfather, William Steel Dickson, a Presbyterian clergyman widely believed to have been a general in the United Irishmen militia and, therefore, like his forebear Robert, viewed as a traitor by subsequent generations of Ulster Protestants. Unlike Robert, "an ambiguous man who left almost no written imprint in his life" (126), William was survived by a self-penned book of sermons and a richly detailed autobiography entitled "A Narrative of the Confinement and Exile of William Steel Dickson. D.D." Nevertheless, Lundy describes the latter as "oddly selective", a text defined by vagaries and evasions, and concedes that, as regards William's life, "We know only a little […] and must speculate about the rest" (129). The reliable factual evidence

37. In Georgia Macbeth, *A Plurality of Identities: Ulster Protestantism in Contemporary Northern Irish Drama*, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

reveals that William was born the son of a poor tenant farmer in Ballycraigy, Co. Antrim, and subsequently graduated as a Doctor of Divinity from Glasgow University, thereafter becoming both a Moderator of the Presbyterian Synod of Ulster and a staunch advocate of Catholic emancipation. His views on Catholics were representative of those of the minority liberal "New Light" tendency within Presbyterianism evident at the time and he subsequently became adjutant general of the Co. Down branch of the United Irishmen, replacing the ex-soldier, librarian and revolutionary leader Thomas Russell, who was captured by the government in 1796 and held without trial for five years. Described by Lord Londonderry in an official dispatch as "one of the most violent and seditious characters in the country", William was arrested just days before the United Irishmen rebellion occurred; he was initially held in the notorious so-called "Black hole" prison ship in Belfast lough before being transferred to Fort George prison in the Scottish highlands. Interned without trial for more than four years, he was eventually released in 1802 and became minister of a new congregation in the small market town of Keady, in Co. Armagh.

In Lundy's eyes, "William was rebel leader, a man of the cloth turned wood kern", and he defines him as "a dissenting Protestant, a Presbyterian and a descendant of Scottish settlers, yet an Irishman nevertheless, whose cause was Irish independence" (128). It was the latter political aspiration which was to be subsequently regarded by successive Ulster Protestants as a profoundly misguided one, and Lundy examines how revisionist narratives of the rising began almost immediately with the publication of Sir Richard Musgraves's *Memoirs of the Different Rebellions in Ireland*, a partisan polemic which became the standard Protestant interpretation of the events leading up to the United Irishmen rebellion. The rising was subsequently imprinted within the Ulster Protestant collective psyche as a priest-led conspiracy in the tradition of 1641 and its Ulster manifestation was a matter of "misguided" Presbyterians led astray by traitors. According to Lundy, "The Protestants wrote themselves out of 1798", and he suggests how "[f]or the great majority of Protestants, William and his comrades were merely Lundys before their time" (177). Once again, as in the historical paradigms surrounding the Siege of Derry, the denial of complexity and the resort to a simplicity which augments the sectarian design is starkly evident.

Lundy's evident admiration for William's enlightened moral and political values do not preclude him from a realization that such principled convictions signify merely a temporary hiatus in the normal scheme of religious animosity and embittered sectarian hatred so endemic to life in Ulster. They represent merely "a conceit in the face of the entrenched sectarian hostility of the mass of Protestants and Catholics" (186) in the Province. Lundy directly confronts such atavistic attitudes through a depiction of Billy Lundy, his paternal grandfather and a man described as a "typical and loyal member of the tribe" (21) and an "Ulster Protestant Everyman."

The antithesis of the Ecumenical William, and a man "who didn't like Catholics at all", Billy was born in 1890 in Carrickfergus's Irish quarter – an area once described by Louis MacNeice as "a slum for the blind and the halt" – and was employed both as a gasworks labourer and shipyard man, working for a period as a riveter on the Titanic. He was an active "true blue" Orangeman, a member of the UVF and a signatory of the Solemn League and Covenant which bound by plrdge the majority of adult male Protestants in Ulster to resisting in what they viewed as the machinations of Home Rule. Described by Lundy as a man for whom Home Rule meant "Rome Rule", Billy together with the vast majority of his co-religionists in the north, considered Charles Stewart Parnell, the foremost political advocate of Irish independence, as "just another bollocksey, Taig-loving traitorous Protestant, a Lundy for his time" (245). Billy was also a member of the ill-fated 36th Ulster Division, whose ranks were decimated at the Battle of the Somme, although somewhat fortuitously, he had been invalidated out of the regiment prior to it shipping for France. Although absent from the appalling scenes witnessed at the Somme on 16th July 1916, Billy's story is interwoven into the fabric of the events witnessed that day in order to emphasise the pivotal role the massacre of the Ulster Division held for subsequent generations of Ulster Protestants. Lundy also draws a parallel between Billy's proclivity for personalized, close contact violence and Ulster's side into civil unrest and partition and contends that his paternal grandfather was "a living summation of what Ulster Protestants had become by the beginning of the First World War; a tribe united in their hostility to Catholics and to the project of an independent Ireland". He analyses how, when faced with what they viewed as the serious constitutional crisis of Home Rule, the Protestants "plunged back in time, into the chaos and multiplicity of history, to draw out the clear and simple things they required to help them in their present trouble" (247). Historical narratives such as those surrounding "The Glorious Twelfth" – the commemoration of the Battle of the Boyne – and the Siege of Derry became stripped of their complexity and assumed even greater significance within a mindset that appeared increasingly defined by a sterile and unimaginative tribalism. Interestingly, while charting the degeneration of the benign ideal of the united Irishmen into what he terms as "the fearful, self-destructive, dead-end of fundamentalist Protestant intransigence" (253), Lundy casts a – partially – sympathetic eye over such an entrenchment of views, foregrounding it as an inevitable reaction to the exclusivist nature of the Catholic and Nationalist ideologies of the time: "there was no reaching out, no attempt to assuage the demographic and political fears of the Protestants" (271). Whether a "reaching out" to men such as Billy and other, like-minded Ulster Protestants of his generation, could have substantially altered the course of subsequent Irish history, is a question insufficiently explored in *Men That God Made Mad*; nevertheless, Lundy's reconstruction of his grandfather's life and political allegiances is highly significant in one

other respect. While admitting that, regarding Billy "no live memory comes to me" (104), Lundy reveals how the latter has bequeathed to him some important memorabilia, including a soldier's helmet, a New Testament Bible and a junior Orange sash. There also exists a surviving photograph of Lundy and his grandfather posing together in the living room of Lundy's original family home in Belfast, a symbolic representation of what the author terms "the vanished past", and taken when he was approximately four years old. The existence of these physical mementoes, so redolent of the indelible link between his own and Ulster's past, leads to a subtle and revealing modification in Lundy's narrative, as he subsequently relies less on the examination of historical records and more on personal and familial recollections. This shift in emphasis facilitates the "opening up" of a narrative space whereby Lundy can examine, not only his troubled relationship with a depressive and violent father but also issues related to his own personal identity and its relationship to the Ulster Protestant tradition.

It is appropriate that the subtitle of Lundy's text states clearly that his investigation into myth, truth and terror in Northern Ireland is to be considered "a journey[38]". As most readers of Lundy's text will doubtless be aware, the motif of "a journey" or, (as in previous historical eras), "a pilgrimage" is a common feature of a type of autobiographical writing which attempts to give meaning to the flux of personal experience, in the form of a physical, emotional and psychological journey towards the redemptive goal of self-knowledge. In his attentiveness to the interaction between the private and collective spheres and his sensitivity to the manner in which his own personal story reflects aspects of the Ulster Protestant experience, Lundy seeks to achieve a renegotiation of selfhood and a more definitive sense of individual identity. Through engaging with the processes and experiences that have shaped him as a member of an Ulster Protestant family, he positions himself in a metaphorical space where personal memory, cultural allegiances and concepts of the self merge. This leads him to assess the extent to which the paradigms of an Ulster Protestant sensibility are manifested in the unfolding of his own perception of "selfhood". Lundy is, of course, by no means the first Northern Irish Protestant writer to engage upon such a "journey"; nevertheless, he scrupulously avoids the sentimental homilies so frequently evident in such narratives and brings a lacerating honesty to bear on the issue of individual agency vis-á-vis the determining power of cultural and historical conditioning. The dual feelings of attraction and revulsion which he exhibits towards the Ulster Protestant traditions he has imbibed since childhood, make him, it could be argued, uniquely qualified to gauge the validity of

38. Geoffrey Beattie also uses the term "a journey" when describing his own quest to establish clearly definable links between his own personal identity and his Ulster Protestant background. Stating how "I have always wanted a clearer sense of who I am and where I belong," he writes, "This book was necessarily going to be a journey – a journey back home and a journey back through a lifetime and through history" (11).

Conor Cruise O'Brien's adage quoted above about the "Ancestral Voice": "It's there in the basement and we can hear it clearly if we listen carefully."

Barry Sloan has written how, for some Northern Irish Protestant writers, "a self-conscious evaluation of their Protestant background and of the 'state of mind' which characterizes it [has] convinced them of the necessity of deliberately distancing themselves from it[39]". Lundy's attitude is decidedly more ambivalent than this, something that is evident in the prologue to his text, where he concedes: "I've paid particular attention to the Protestants of Northern Ireland all my life because they're my people – at least in a sense" (7). This admission lays bare the conditional nature of his personal affinity with both Ulster Protestants and indeed, the Northern Ireland state. As regards the latter, although for his mother and father it would always be "home", for Lundy himself it is a "distant point of origin, an unavoidable genetic and cultural inheritance" (8). This seeming disconnection from his "point of origin" is partly attributable to his family's decision to relocate to England when Lundy is still a child. He reveals how, when he is seven years of age and living in Cheltham in the English West County, his father informs him that his grandfather Lundy has died in Belfast: "I didn't cry, nor did I feel the need to. Billy was an old man, remote in Belfast. I was a little English boy whose parents happened to speak with Irish accents" (308). Believing that he, like his father and his cousins, has escaped both the obvious and insidious conditioning of the north's sectarian worldview, he admits to an overwhelming sense of alienation when he returns to Belfast during a period of heightened political tension: "It was as if I'd been dropped into a dangerous, alien place […]. I was choking under the low sky, in the mean little streets, among the people twisted by the ancient history and fear" (223). He is repelled by the most commonplace elements of the Ulster Protestant's commemorative traditions, such as the annual burning of the bonfires on the 11th of July: "The fire, the drums, the singing and cheering people were a savage, atavistic spectacle that shivered my skin" (116). When visiting the Apprentice Boys Orange Hall in Derry, he feels intimated by the aura of "jazzed up menace" emanating from the defensive and combative young Protestant men assembled there. He contrasts the harsh, belligerent tension in the Memorial Hall, where the atmosphere of imminent violence is barely contained, to the sensation of freedom and relief he feels when walking through a Catholic enclave in the same city. This relief is partly based on his awareness that, with his beard and "untidy" look he appears, at least to his co-religionists cognizant of the peculiar sectarian semiotics governing social relations in Northern Ireland, to be "obviously" of the Roman Catholic persuasion; an erroneous identification which could quite easily place him in immediate danger from members of his own tribe. Leaving the Memorial Hall, he yearns for the warm, welcoming atmos-

39. Barry Sloan, *Writers and Protestantism in the North of Ireland: Heirs to Adamnation?*, p. 5.

phere of a Catholic pub in which the clientele would "be loose and easy, having a good time, reveling in the craic, and confident of the future" (113).

Despite such attempts at distancing himself from the more aggressive manifestations of Ulster Protestant identity, Lundy admits how, if one is born in Northern Ireland, "the tribe you were born into or belonged to at one time, […] seems never to let you go" (231). This conviction is the result of a number of disparate but episodically linked incidents which Lundy experiences when visiting Northern Ireland on various occasions and that prompt him into an acknowledgement of the "pull and rasp" of his own tribal identification. When examining a portrait of his ancestor William Steel Dickson which hangs in a small Presbyterian Church in the village of Keady, Co. Antrim, he admits to feeling "the pull of those lines that join generations. They had uncoiled and slithered thought time, surviving William's death, and all the deaths after him and had found "their way to me" (136). Lundy also recounts being involved in a revealing episode which took place in a Protestant pub situated in the area where his family had previously been domiciled during the Troubles era. Entering alone, unannounced and unrecognized, he is greeted with the suspicious stares of inebriated men and the forthright enquiry of "who the fuck are you?" from the proprietor. After explaining that he is "Maud Lundy's son visiting from Canada", his religious affiliation is immediately identifiable and he is treated as "a returning member of the tribe". While proceeding to become riotously drunk with his fellow Protestants, he admits to feeling "a deep, primitive, tribal [sense of] belonging. In the pub, these were my people and this my place once again – home" (233). Perhaps the most revealing example of how Lundy experiences the tug of ethnic self-reference occurs when he visits his old family home close to the Holy Land district in South Belfast, in a street lying in immediate proximity to the pub where he had been received in a manner closely approximating a scene from a Wild West film. He is shown around the – substantially renovated – house by Leona, a Catholic University student originally from Belleek in County Fermanagh. Faced with her unconscious bigotry and conviction that sectarianism in Northern Ireland emanated only from the majority Protestant population, Lundy admits to "tremors of indignation and yes, of anger too" (320). Leona's inability to recognize that there might be culpability on both sides or that, in Lundy's words "Protestant grievances might be comprehensible, even credible", leads him to believe how "[i]n her own pleasant, new generational way, Leona was […] as bigoted as any old-timer". Lundy admits that his anger is related to a conviction that the previously Protestant dominated area in which his former family home stood had been "ethnically cleansed" by Catholics: "This young woman stood there 'in my house', in 'my neighbourhood', the blond and naïve beneficiary of sectarian terror. All the families I had known – my own family – had been forced out by Catholic gunmen" (320). His sudden anger acts as a kind of epiphany, an invaluable insight into the unconscious residue

of tribal affiliation and it is to Lundy's credit that he acknowledges how "although only a flash in my mind […] it was there, surprising and clear" (320).

Despite such occasional moments of ethnic identification, Lundy's journey into the heart and history of Ulster Protestantism leads him to certain, profoundly unsettling conclusions about Northern Irish Protestants and the state to which they profess allegiance. While admitting that partition was an inevitable result of the dramatic distinctiveness of Ulster from the rest of the island, he is unsparing in his criticism of the six-county statelet, arguing: "if the Unionist Northern Irish state had been a person, a diagnosis would have been comprehensive: deeply neurotic […] fundamentally sociopathic and episodically psychotic" (311). Lundy is equally scathing about Ulster Protestants' insistence on their essential "Britishness", and cogently notes how the British people and government, "detested them and thought they were just another bunch of violent paddies" (3). He points to the essential irony – an irony which he refers to as "poignant in its intensity" – of the Ulster Protestants yearning to be seen as British, whereas in their frequent resort to violent remedies, "they prove themselves Irish to the core". To Lundy "the Ulster Protestants' definition of themselves as British, so as to avoid admitting that they are Irish, is an essential subterfuge and in their hearts they know it" (301). Finally, in a passage which would doubtless induce palpitations in the heart of an unreconstructed Loyalist, and identify Lundy as a true descendant of the traitor Robert Lundy, he writes:

> Deep inside their fearful hearts, the Protestants of Northern Ireland know, although they will not, or cannot yet, acknowledge it, that the Lundys have been right all along. In the end, the Protestants don't have a choice. They will surrender, with caution and with unavoidable fear, to the idea that Ireland has contained them for four hundred years and that they belong there and nowhere else. They must compromise and agree to terms. (322)

He then adds, for good measure: "The truth is that only a Lundy can save them." Well…perhaps. Thankfully, one is not obliged to agree with Lundy's belief that "the Lundys have been right all along" in order to appreciate his attempt to subvert stereotypical images of Ulster Protestants as being misguided cultural orphans. Equally, a reader inclined to view Lundy's historical and genealogical investigation sympathetically may find certain aspects of his text somewhat unconvincing. In reference to his examination of the conflict in the six counties, it could be argued that, by failing to engage with the historical myths and traditions of both sides, he ultimately fails to engage with the issue of Northern Ireland *per se*. Equally, he could be accused of minimizing the role England has played in the conflict to a point where it could almost be described as incidental, and his insis-

tence on viewing the Northern Ireland "Troubles" as the "Rosetta Stone" of global conflicts appears somewhat forced. Finally, it is noteworthy how Lundy's text, despite its eloquent dissection of the Ulster Protestant tradition, unconsciously reproduces and replicates one of the more disturbing features of that very tradition, that is, the marginalization of the female gender. In both Ulster Protestant history and in *Men That God Made Mad*, women are essentially invisible. In this respect, the author reveals himself to be a true and loyal son of Ulster, rather than a dissenting, traitorous "Lundy".

Nevertheless, with its insistence that Ulster Protestants have an interesting story to tell and its focus on the importance of reconciling the complexity of a community's past with its potential future, *Men That God Made Mad* attempts a reframing of traditional arguments. Lundy's examination of ancestral lore and the Ulster Protestant worldview becomes an occasion, not for cultural disparagement or personal self-aggrandisement, but rather a creative and potentially liberating investigation into the ideological manipulation of historical events. In relation to other recent literary, historical or autobiographical writings by Ulster Protestants about their traditions, Lundy's text reveals none of the cultural self-disgust so evident in, for example, Marie Jones's drama *A Night in November*, nor the self-congratulatory and sentimental pieties of "homecoming" narratives, such as Geoffrey Beattie's *Protestant Boy*. His constant presentation of an alternative view, together with his inquisitive and skeptical values serve as a reminder that identity is not simply something that one is born into, but what one *does*. This is particularly relevant in terms of post-agreement Northern Ireland, as there is increasing evidence that some Northern Irish Protestants, far from attempting to create innovative forms of Loyalism relevant for the new age, are rather attempting to restate Loyalism in its most fundamental form. As recent events show, some are intent on embarking upon a retreat into a nihilistic form of revanchism, manifested in a "mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the most Protestant of them all" type of mentality. If we accept Jonathan Burgess's contention that "It is very important […] both from an outward perspective and introspectively for the Protestant community to educate itself and see itself as more than just a reactionary force", then a text such as *Men That God Made Mad* can certainly be viewed as making an important contribution to such a debate. If we accept Jean Braham's belief that "The imagined order which [the writer] creates legitimizes in others some images of that order […] which would otherwise be at least partly suppressed[40]", it is possible to perceive Lundy's narrative as a welcome attempt to create images suitable for a more tolerant and complex view of history. For this reason alone, the reader of *Men That God Made Mad* is thankful that Lundy decided to embark upon his "journey".

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40. Braham, *op. cit.*, p. 37.